


N<sup>o</sup> 31. *Friday, March 24.*


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— *Dic, SENIOR, bullâ dignissime, nescis  
Quot habeat veneres aliena pecunia ? nescis  
Quem tua simplicitas risum vulgo moveat, cum  
Exigis à quoquam ne pejeret, Et putet ullis  
Esse aliquod numen Templis, Aræq; rubenti.*

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Juv.

\*  T must be Matter of great Satisfaction to me, in the Prosecution of this Undertaking, that no Arguments have been urged by any of the Writers, who have sprung up against me, but such as would equally serve to discredit the Zeal of the worthiest Patriots or the best-designing Authors, and might as justly be made use of to defend the *worst Ministers*, that ever were in the World, as to vindicate *Those*, for whose Service they have been advanced.

Though none of the Writings of my Adversaries have met with such a Reception from the Publick as can make me in any wise uneasy, or be thought to deserve any Answer ; yet it may not be improper to take a short Review of the general Topicks, which

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\* N. B. Though Mr. *Franklin* had been taken up for Printing the *Vision of Camillick*, [ N<sup>o</sup> 16. ] yet the first Prosecution in *Westminster-Hall* was grounded upon this *Paper* ; but by a Flaw in some of the Forms of Proceeding, it came to nothing.

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have been most insisted on; from whence it will appear to what low Shifts and miserable Subterfuges they have been driven; and how even *those Men*, who have formerly written with Credit and Success, are obliged to sacrifice their Reputation, when they engage in the Defence of an unjust Cause.

One great Charge, which I have suffered under, in common with many other Gentlemen, is, that I was moved to this Undertaking by *personal Prejudice*; and write out of *Pique, Disappointment* and *Revenge*; a Charge, which has been very loudly and confidently repeated by every vile Tool and wretched Court-scribler against me. Nay, some of them have gone further; and, not content with setting me forth as a *disgusted Malecontent*, have endeavoured to foist *Disaffection* upon me, and make me a *Jacobite* in spite of my Teeth. Though I am conscious of my own Innocence in all these Particulars; yet I am not in the least astonished at such Imputations; because it is a known Artifice of *bad Ministers* to represent all Disapprobation of *their Measures*, as proceeding from the *same Motives*; and to pronounce any Opposition, which *They* meet with, to be the Effect of some secret Design against the *Prince*, whom they serve. But as This is my hard Lot at present, so I have the Pleasure to reflect that it hath been equally the Fate of many worthy Men in all Ages; and particularly of some *most incomparable Persons*, but a few Years ago; as I shall prove at large in my next, by a faithful Abstract of *those Papers*, which were published at that Time against them; and in a succeeding one, I will produce the *Answers*, which They and their Seconds made to those Objections; leaving the Reader to determine, whether they will not equally serve to vindicate the Conduct of *those Gentlemen*, who suffer at present under the like Imputations.

The next Objection, which has been frequently made to these Papers, is that I am guilty of *Disingenuity* and

and a mean Design of calumniating Men in high Stations under *feigned Characters*, and by other indirect Methods, such as *Ironies, Allegories, Parallels*, and remote *Innuendos*; which are called low Arts; unworthy of a generous Adversary; and certain Marks that I am not influenced by any Regard to the *publick Good*; but by *private Views* and *sinister ill Designs*.

In order to make This the more plausible, a great deal of Pains hath been taken to distinguish between *Calumny* and *just Accusation*; which are, no doubt, very essentially different from one another, as a certain worthy Author judiciously observes, when he says that "In one Case a Man must produce his Evidence; name his *Witnesses*; give his *Reasons*; be particular as to *Persons, Places, Times, Circumstances*. In the other, you will meet with little else than *Innuendos*; *general Positions*; *meer Assertions* without *Proof*; *Failings* magnified into *Faults*; *Overights* represented as *high Crimes*; the *Circumstances* of Things over-looked; *odious* and *invidious* Cases put; *different Times* compared, without the Difference of the *Circumstances* of Things, &c." from whence it is inferr'd, that no Man in Power ought to be *accused*, but in such a *publick, open and judicial Manner*; and that all other Methods of exposing or attacking his Reputation, however justly, are *base and scandalous*, and ought to be rejected with Contempt as *meer Obloquy and Scandal*.

I shall make but one general Reply to all this delicate Reasoning, and leave those *political Casuists*, for the future, to ring the Changes on the same darling Topick, as long as they please, without any Interruption.

In the first Place, I absolutely deny the Truth of this Charge; or that I have any other Design in my present Undertaking than to expose *Vice in general*.

and vindicate the Honour of my Country, without alluding<sup>d</sup> to *particular Persons*. But if two Cases happen to be so much alike, that the generality of the World will compare what I relate of *former Times* to the *present*; or if any *great Men* will apply bad Characters to Themselves, I do not think my self answerable for *such Applications*; since I cannot direct the Opinions of the Publick, nor prevent the Reflections of another Man's Conscience.

In the second Place, I cannot agree with this Author that all Methods of *accusing* great Men, except in a *judicial* Manner, are either *mean* or *unjustifiable*; for I must here take the Liberty to distinguish, in my Turn, between *Accusations* of *private Persons*, and of *Men in Authority*. In the *former* Case, the Laws are always open; and the Party injured may reasonably expect Justice, without any Apprehensions from the Power or Riches of the Criminal; which makes all other Kinds of *Accusation* impertinent and scandalous; but in the *latter*, we must not always rely on the most equitable Proceedings or the justest Determination; for *great Men* have frequent Opportunities of screening themselves, in such a Manner, by *Cabals, Alliances, Corruption*, or the *Favour* of an indulgent Prince, that it is commonly very difficult to bring them to condign Punishment; even when they are guilty of the most notorious Oppressions, and are publicly complained of as the Nuisances of their Country.

As there are Times for all Things, so there is more especially a proper Season for bringing *great Offenders* to Justice; which ought not to be undertaken rashly and unadvisedly, but with due Deliberation, and at fit Opportunities, when there is a general Cry for Vengeance and Redress. Things must be first set in a true Light; the Eyes of the People must be open'd; the Force of Prejudice must be overcome; the Influence of Power must be withdrawn; and several preparatory

tory Steps are necessary to be taken, before an *overgrown Criminal* can be brought to a fair Tryal, or Justice can be done to an injur'd Nation.

To accuse a *publick Minister* in the *Zenith* of his Power, would be Madness or Folly; because such a fruitless Attempt must end in his Triumph and the Completion of his Designs. Accordingly we may observe, that several *wicked Ministers*, when they have found themselves waining in their Authority, have defy'd their Adversaries with more than ordinary Insolence, and endeavour'd to provoke them to a *publick Accusation*, before Matters were sufficiently ripen'd for it; well knowing that an *abortive IMPEACHMENT* would serve their Turn as well as the most comprehensive *Act of INDEMNITY*.

But it has always been a Practice, under the most corrupt Administrations, to quote *Examples* and draw *Parallels* out of History, in order to prove what Effect the same Male-practices have had on different States, or on the same States in former Ages; nor can This be look'd upon as disingenuous or a Libel on the *present Ministers* of any Kingdom, any more than a Comment on the *Ten Commandments* can be called a Libel on every *notorious Sinner* in the Parish.

I grant, indeed, that it would be more *honourable*, as well as more *useful*, to write without *Disguise*, provided it were equally *safe*. But would not any Man be esteem'd a *Lunatick*, who should, in plain Terms, attack such a Monster as *Wolsey* or *Buckingham*, in the Plenitude of their Power; especially, if he has any *parallel Instances* at Hand; or can throw the same Thoughts under *Shades* and *Allegories*? I appeal to those Gentlemen, who seem most disturbed at this manner of Writing, whether they thought it, in any wise, *disingenuous*, when they practis'd it themselves, with great Freedom, both in the *late* and the *present* Reign.

If such Objectors were to put their Meaning into plain *English*, it would run much in this Manner. "For God's sake, Gentlemen, why don't you speak out, and subject yourselves to *those Penalties*, which we long to inflict upon you? Methinks, it is very *disingenuous* in you to sculk behind the *Laws*, and publish nothing but what you can *justify*."

Such a Complaint of *Disingenuity* is very extraordinary at this Juncture ; for it seems highly unreasonable to expect that any Man should speak or write on these Subjects, without *Reserve*, at a Time, when even *supposed Ironies, imaginary Parallels, and forced Innuendos* are, by some Persons, thought not to be exempt from the Penalties of the Law.

However, if these worthy Gentlemen, who so courteously invite us to lay our selves open to the Mercy of *great Men*, will undertake to obtain a farther Extension of the *Liberty of the Press* ; or procure a sufficient Warrant for writing with Impunity, and without any Restraint, on these Subjects ; I don't know what I may be tempted to do ; but till I am assured of such an Indemnification, I shall content myself with publishing these plain, general, inoffensive Lectures of *political Morality*, for the Discharge of my own Conscience ; and leave my loving Countrymen to make, or not to make, any *Applications*, as they shall judge proper.

The most extraordinary Objection against me is, that I have presumptuously advanced several untowardly Arguments against *publick Corruption*, and perversely endeavoured to recommend *Frugality* as a national Virtue ; but I have This to urge in my Excuse, that however the *former* may prevail amongst us ; and however the *latter* may seem to have been discountenanced ; yet so much *Decency* has been hitherto preserved, that no Person, except the Author of a late Pamphlet, intituled, *CLODIUS and CICERO*,

has thought fit openly to defend the *one* or explode the *other*.

These, it seems, were mean, prevaricating Compliances, in the Opinion of this Writer ; who resolved to be more *ingenuous* himself ; and, scorning to mince Matters, or conceal any Truth, hath not been ashamed to spread Abroad in the World a publick and avowed Defence of *Bribery, Corruption, and Venality*.

He tells us very frankly that “ Some *publick Corruptions* there are of that Strength and Prevalence, “ that, however *shameful* and *pernicious* they may be, “ they must yet be suffered to *remain* ; ” and seems to insinuate (at least by a stronger *Innuendo* than can be charged upon my Writings) that, *such is the Situation of Things, that Measures strictly Virtuous would bring present Confusion ; and that an endeavour to reform would overturn the Constitution*.

In order to enforce these worthy Tenets, he produces several Examples of great Men, who have perished in the Defence of *popular Liberty*, and in their Attempts to remove *publick Corruptions* and *Enormities*, viz. the two famous *Gracchi* ; *Agis* and *Cleomenes*, Kings of *Sparta* ; and the *second Brutus* ; from whence he seems to draw this Conclusion : that *no Man, for the future, ought to make the like Attempts* ; whereas, methinks, the proper Inference of an honest Briton should be, that *we ought to follow the Example of those noble Patriots, in asserting the Liberties of our Country, and not to be deterr'd by any Difficulties, or even Death itself, from pursuing the same glorious Cause*.

He then, with an insulting Air, puts the following Questions. “ What have availed all our *sumptuary Laws* ? What all Those against *Gaming* and “ *Duelling* ? What Those against *Bribery* ? Only to “ demonstrate how much more Force there is in *Luxury, and Vanity, and Avarice*, than there is in

“ *Laws*

"*Laws with all their Penalties?*" This is indeed too true; but I am willing to hope that they have, at least, some Influence, and may possibly keep many Men from being more bare-faced in their Iniquities. They hang over their Heads *in terrorem*; and may, in any flagrant Case, be put in Execution; for which Reason, however ineffectual they may be at present, I should be very sorry to see them *repealed*.

He endeavours to discourage *publick Frugality* (which he acknowledges to be an *excellent Virtue*) in the same manner that he patronizes *publick Corruption* (which he allows to be a *shameful and pernicious Vice*) by telling us that it was the *Bane* of the Emperor *Galba*, who was murdered by his Soldiers for refusing to *bribe* them; upon which he observes, that "the Romans were then come to that pass of *Sordidness* and *Venality*, that they would not do their *Duty*; no, not save their Country without *Lucre*, and *Wages extraordinary*. This was a *melancholy Evil*; but it was *necessary*; for *without it*, the State could not *subsist*."

I need not explain the *Doctrine*, which is imply'd in this Paragraph; since it is so very obvious, that it cannot possibly escape the shallowest Apprehension.

I will conclude with one more Objection to these Papers; which is, that such *general Invectives* (as they are called) might be equally applied to any *Ministers*, however *honest and virtuous*; whereas I think it might be much more strongly objected against these Writers, that their *general Apologies* and *Panegyricks* would equally serve to flatter and defend any *Administration*, however *corrupt*; for my Papers, which consist of *general Satire* against wicked Men, will lose their Effect and cease to be severe, when they are apply'd to Persons, who are *not guilty*; or, at least, *not generally supposed to be guilty* of the Crimes, which they condemn; whereas the Writings of my Adversaries, especially of the *Author*, whom I mentioned last,